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AN  
AFFECTIONATE  
ADDRESS

To all who frequent

Religious Assemblies.

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*Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, Matt. vii. 21.*

*Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls, James i. 22.*

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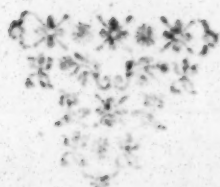
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AFFECTIOUS  
ADDRESS

To all who frequent

Religious Assemblies.

Not every one who joins into our Lord's Supper, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that shall the will of my Father which is in Heaven, Matt. vii. 21.  
He is born of the word, and not of the flesh, receiving him into his house, James i. 22.



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silver purity.

## ADDRESS, &c.

**A**lthough the observations which occur in this  
Address may be common, and such as most  
people experience, yet, through the blessing of  
God, they may be useful to all who peruse them:  
And as that was the intention of their being publish-  
ed, the author hopes his labour will not be in vain.

When we take a survey of the multitude who  
frequent places of public worship, of all denomi-  
nations, and examine into the general tenor of  
their lives, there appears so much contradiction,  
that it may not be amiss to enquire into the causes  
thereof, and point out a short method whereby  
people may be much benefited by such public  
worship.

1<sup>st</sup>. How many attend publick worship out of  
form and custom, without any other motive what-  
ever; who, if they are not wholly inattentive,  
yet



yet behave with much unconcernedness and indifference, and go away no more profited than when they came.

2dly. How many go purely to see and be seen, to learn new lessons of vanity, to remark the behaviour of those around them, to comment upon the preacher and his discourse; who, while they seem to pray to God, are making a vain ostentation of their person and dress; thus mocking God and dissembling with him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

3dly. How many, having itching ears, go on purpose to hear such a person, because he maintains such and such a particular doctrine, though when he labours to speak to their consciences and convince them of sin, they turn a deaf ear to his reproofs.

4thly. How many go to places of public worship without once looking up to God for his blessing, who pray only by form, without desiring what they ask, or hoping to be heard; who hear the word, without examining, considering, or applying what they hear; and who rejoice when the tedious hour is over, and they have done their duty as they call it.

5thly. How many live in known sin, in open transgression, and yet continue to go to places of public worship; others, instead of checking, rather indulge vain and wandering thoughts, and remark their neighbour's behaviour, though quite negligent of their own; who shew their dissembling with

with God by their wanton looks and lazy postures. — Now, many of these persons attend for fear of being missed, and others, because they cannot stay away, being under governors and parents.

6thly. There are others, shocking to think of! who entirely prevent the reaping any advantage from these ordinances, by their placing a confidence in them, who think they do God service, and certainly merit his favour, instead of using them as the means or channels of Grace, waiting, expecting, and hoping to receive his blessing.

When we take a survey of so many persons who frequent religious assemblies, and examine into the causes of so much carelessness, formality and hypocrisy, we shall find, that, notwithstanding all their attendance, or even the pretensions many make of being better than their neighbours; for many there are, who would not abstain from prayer, sermon and the Lord's supper, who have no real weighty concern for their eternal welfare, but are loves of pleasure, more than lovers of God, having only the form, but not the power of godliness; are as vain and earthly, proud and passionate, and as much lovers of themselves, as those who seldom or never attend these ordinances; they have not a due sense of their fallen state by nature, of their guilt, their misery and danger; they do not *feel* sin to be a burden too heavy for them to bear; therefore they do not, they cannot heartily apply to Jesus Christ for pardon and redemption, but go on in a round of duties, lulling their souls to rest, unawakened and unconcerned; without hope, and without God in the world.

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It is then the real design of these lines, to undeceive such miserable sinners, to put them in a method how to reap advantage from so many hours spent in religious exercises; and also to help and assist those who go on but slowly in the way to eternal life.

I would in the first place, warn you against entering God's house without first begging the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to enable you to ask such things as shall please him, and also to bless what you shall hear to the saving of your soul; then considering yourself as in the immediate presence of God, who is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, set a watch over your heart, and beware, lest your thoughts are employed about vain or earthly things, and you be one of those who worship God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him; guard your eyes from roving about, and strive to be recollected and composed; remember for what end you are come, viz. to seek for pardon and holiness through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ; and for all other blessings, temporal and spiritual; be sure your dependence is on him, or your prayers will be rejected; when wandering thoughts intrude, immediately turn yourself to God, and beseech his deliverance; be importunate, be earnest at the throne of grace for yourself and others; and after you find peace with God, and joy in believing, yet still remember that humility, love, meekness, and all the graces of the Spirit are to be obtained by prayer and faith—*Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find: And what-*



*whatsoever ye shall ask in faith, believing, ye shall receive,* are the encouraging words of our Lord.

Again, while you are hearing God's word read or explained, look only to God for success, and beg of him to apply it to your conscience; sit like a scholar at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him; guard against an indolent temper; beware of prejudice against the preacher; carefully endeavour to retain that part which most nearly concerns you; and should any doctrine be advanced contrary to your sentiments, beware, lest it choke the good word by your prejudice and reasonings; treasure up what will make you wise unto salvation, and then you will find its good effects; examine your life by this touch-stone, and pray over the sermon in your retirements, pouring out your soul before God; and be assured, that unless you find benefit by such ordinances, there is still some root of bitterness in you, some secret sin, or something which prevents the word from taking deep root in your soul; examine well, and mock not God, for ordinances are precious, and life's uncertain. Beware of all conversation after preaching, which may interrupt your meditations, nor suffer the word to slip through your mind without due digestion, for then Satan will be very busy with you; therefore guard against his devices; and so much the more, as he goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

These warnings and directions, through God's blessing, are necessary for you: do not then read them  
indiffer-

indifferently, but beseech the Holy Spirit to write them on your heart: Govern your conduct by the above advice, if you find it agreeable to God's word; and then you will soon see the salvation of God; will soon arrive at that happy place, where all means will cease; where sin and sorrow will flee away, and where you will eternally enjoy God.

Though I have said nothing concerning singing the praise of God, yet remember, that if you find no relish, no delight in this heavenly exercise, but much more pleasure in wanton songs, it is because you are not renewed in the spirit of your mind, are not created anew in Christ Jesus. When this happy change is brought about, you will reject, with disdain, all frothy and vain diversions, and count it a joyful hour, when you can join the society of those, to chaunt your Redeemer's praise, with whom you hope to live for ever in glory.

F T N I S.

These warnings and directions, through God's blessing, are necessary for you: do not then read them indifferently.



